

*Storage and the Utilization of the Phosphates in Pregnancy.*

In a recent number of the *Union Médicale*, Dr. DELATTRE discusses a phenomenon of early pregnancy which he considers has not hitherto received the attention which, both on physiological and therapeutical grounds, it deserves. He refers to the almost complete disappearance of the phosphates from the urine. These salts, he says, are, except the small proportion as yet required by the development of the fœtus, either stored up in the maternal bones, which increase in weight and density, or, occasionally, deposited on their surface in the form of osteophytes, which have long been looked on as errors of nutrition. In the later months, when the fœtal bones are growing and ossifying rapidly, these reserves are drawn on, and the osteophytes, if present, disappear. The absorption is not complete at the time when the child is born, but goes on during the normal duration of lactation supplying phosphates to the milk. Such is the course of events in the case of a healthy and well-nourished woman: if, on the other hand, she be weakly and ill-fed, she is compelled, instead of laying up and subsequently employing a reserve of phosphates, to draw on her own tissues for the supply, which, after all, is insufficient for the wants of her child, who is consequently puny, rickety, and late in dentition. These considerations suggested to him the administration of phosphates in the most easily assimilated form to the mother during the whole period of pregnancy; and this treatment was in nine cases out of ten followed by the best results. In one instance, out of four children, the first two were feeble in mind and body, with enlarged glands, soft bones, pale complexion, etc.; but the last two, though born after the mother had been further reduced by anxiety and a nervous malady, were robust, rosy, and boisterous. This he attributes solely to the employment during the last two pregnancies of the treatment mentioned. Again, the first two children of one of his colleagues did not cut their first teeth until more than eleven months of age, but the third, after the mother had been taking phosphate of lime, cut them without any disturbance of health at a few days over four months, and was in every respect stronger and healthier than the older ones. He also believes that he has seen a marked amelioration in the vomiting and other nervous derangements accompanying pregnancy in the cases in which he has adopted this mode of treatment.—*Med. Times and Gaz.*, April 15, 1882.

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*Hydorrhœa during Pregnancy.*

M. QUEIREL has published in the *Marseille Méd.* an interesting memoir, in which he studies the various elements of the still debated question of the nature of the watery discharges frequently occurring during pregnancy, and spoken of under the generic name of hydorrhœa. He relates first two cases. In one, a multipara, six months advanced in pregnancy, there had been two effusions of colourless fluid. He was called after the third, which occurred during the night without conscious pain. From the odour, the marks on the linen, and the abundance of the loss, he had no doubt that this was a flow of amniotic fluid, although there was no commencing miscarriage. With prolonged repose and laudanum injections, the patient went on satisfactorily to full time, and was delivered of a healthy child. In the second case, a similar loss occurred at the fourth month, accompanied by abdominal pain and uterine colic. Rest and laudanum injections relieved the pain and arrested the loss. Similar phenomena reappeared and disappeared at the end of five weeks, but fifteen days afterwards the discharge recurred and was followed by abortion. The fœtus was six months old and well developed. M. Queirel points out that cases are reported under the

name of hydorrhœa which are of certainly different natures, and include the flow of fluids of a very different aspect, nature, and origin from amniotic fluid. In some cases, there is a rupture of the membranes from injury or severe contraction, chiefly occurring during the night. This form of rupture is usually followed by labour from six to nine weeks afterwards. The discharge in these cases should be called hydramniorrhœa. When the liquid which escapes presents somewhat of the character of the amniotic fluid and the flow is reproduced at regular intervals, and the pregnancy continues its regular course, the case is probably one of true hydorrhœa; that is to say, a flow of serous fluid secreted by the maternal vessels and the external surface of the ovum. This is the theory of Nægelé. Exceptionally, the possibility may be admitted of a fluid furnished by an accidental cyst, by a twin ovum of which the product has been dissolved, or by the uterine glands of the cervix, true catarrh of the cervix. Finally, cases may be diagnosed which may be confounded with these, and are not the least important; that is to say, cases of incontinence of urine, or of vesico-vaginal fistula, and cases in which the fluid may come from the vulvar glands. The mistake of confounding the flow with escape of urine has, especially, often been committed. The following case observed by Magail deserves to be related as an example. A woman, in her first pregnancy, several times had watery discharges; she was, however, delivered at full term of a living child, and the hydorrhœa continued after pregnancy. In the second pregnancy the flow did not cease, and it was verified by several physicians whom she consulted. M. Depaul himself treated her for chronic affection of the uterus, and discovered only after several weeks of treatment that the fluid was furnished by the bladder. There was not, however, any vesico-vaginal fistula, but the anterior wall of the vagina was relaxed and ruptured on the middle of the vulva. There was a vaginal cystocele, with depression of the uterus. M. Magail relieved the infirmity by raising the uterus with the aid of tampons immersed in astringent fluid.—*London Medical Record*, March 15, 1882.

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*Syphilis in Pregnancy and its Effects on the Offspring.*

In this paper, Prof. VON HECKER, of Munich, gives an account of 173 cases of childbirth in connection with syphilis (*Wiener Medizin. Blätter*, 1881, No. 37). The cases are divided into four groups. The first includes cases, 81 in number, in which the mother at the time of her confinement was suffering from active syphilis which had not been treated. Broad condylomata about the anus and on the labia, or ulcers of the fossa navicularis, were usually present, but general signs of syphilis were very rarely found. Of these children, 46 were born at term; 35 were premature or stillborn; 46 children were free from signs of syphilis at birth, and remained so during their stay in the lying-in hospital. On the other hand, 25 children were born in a macerated condition, without any syphilitic lesions of the internal organs. The placenta, however, was frequently increased in weight. In seven cases the children showed specific lesions, such as pemphigus, or syphiloma of the internal organs; while in three, death was ascribed to non-syphilitic causes.—Group 2 comprises cases in which the mother's syphilis had been treated, usually in hospital, for a shorter or longer period. In the 32 cases of this kind, a similar effect was produced on the offspring as in group 1; 14 children were born at term, and 18 prematurely; 11 were quite healthy; 9 dead and rotten; 4 bore signs of syphilis; and 8 were weakly, but not specially diseased.—Group 3 contains 7 cases of old syphilis; 2 of the children were born healthy; 4 with signs of syphilis; and 1 was in a weakly condition.—Group 4 consists of 53 cases in which, in spite of the most careful examination, no trace of syphilis was discovered in the mother. Consequently, in the opinion of the author, the children derived